

STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

MONTHLY REPORT

JULY 10, 1956

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BERGEN-PASSAIC FREEWAY

Following a three-week tour of Bergen and Passaic Counties - mostly by night - the alignment of the Freeway was finalized and made public on June 26. The eventual line incorporated many modifications suggested by municipal officials and at the time of our meetings with them it received "off-the-record" approval in most towns. Subsequent public utterances would appear to be for purely political purposes in the face of clamor by "rabble-rousers".

In meeting with the 16 municipalities, we endeavored at all times to obtain suggestions for the alignment and insofar as was possible we accepted them. In this respect the final line is the result of "give and take" on the part of the municipalities and the State.

In Paterson the announcement of the line resulted in practically no reverberations. In fact, Mayor O'Byrne was quoted in the NEWARK NEWS as saying the new alignment does the "least damage possible" to his city. "The path will cause a temporary loss of ratables which will be made up by future progress brought by the highway." The article went on to say he also thanked Palmer for "cooperating with Paterson in making the alignment changes."

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Mayor Vogt of Ridgefield Park is quoted by the NEWARK NEWS as follows: "The changes from the original alignment have removed many borough objections. - - - This route is a 75-percent improvement. We're not happy with it, but it does far less damage."

Public reaction has ranged from these statements to out-and-out hostility as in East Paterson where some wit asked whether they were getting the "Palm - er the fist."

Perhaps the BERGEN EVENING RECORD summed up the situation best when they editorially stated, "It is by no means suggested the creation of this colossal common facility will not cause personal inconvenience and heartache. But from any elevated viewpoint - - - the national defense, the potential desperate need to evacuate the metropolitan complex, the economic waste and frightful perils of the existing east-west crossings, the pressures of commerce, even mere motoring pleasure - - - the primacy of the Expressway by this time goes without saying. The alternatives have been patiently and utterly exhausted. Ample time and some room remain for constructive thinking on the alignment but this will have to be something more substantial than NO, NO, NO."

As you know, the cost of consolation tickets on the toll bridge was reduced on July 1 from 5 cents to 2 1/2 cents.

The following table lists the time and place of each municipal meeting.

June 5	-	6:30 p. m.	-	Ridgefield Park
" 6	-	10:30 a. m.	-	Paterson
" 12	-	2:30 p. m.	-	So. Hackensack
" 12	-	6:30 p. m.	-	Saddle Brook
" 13	-	8:00 p. m.	-	Rochelle Park
" 14	-	8:00 p. m.	-	Englewood
" 18	-	8:30 p. m.	-	Bogota
" 19	-	7:00 p. m.	-	E. Paterson
" 20	-	10:30 a. m.	-	Lodi
" 20	-	2:30 p. m.	-	W. Paterson
" 20	-	8:00 p. m.	-	Teaneck
" 21	-	8:00 p. m.	-	Leonia
" 22	-	9:30 a. m.	-	Ridgefield Park
" 22	-	10:30 a. m.	-	Wayne Township
" 22	-	1:30 p. m.	-	Totowa
" 22	-	3:30 p. m.	-	Fort Lee

A map of the final alignment together with the press announcement is made part of this report.

PHILLIPSBURG-EASTON BRIDGE

Drawings are now being prepared to repair the Northampton Street bridge to its pre-flood condition. Preliminary estimates place the cost in excess of \$300,000. At the same time traffic studies are being made by Coverdale & Colpitt to determine the effect of a new free bridge upon the revenues of the existing toll bridge.

This report has been promised for July 13.

As you know, the cost of commutation tickets on the toll bridge was reduced on July 1 from 5 cents to 2 1/2 cents.

SKYWAY RESURFACING

During the past month a coating of tar and stone chips was applied to the Pulaski Skyway roadway to reduce skidding caused by the terrazzo-like surface of the worn concrete. In the past this "slick" surface was the cause of many traffic deaths. Despite pressure from Chief Krapke of the Hudson County Police to perform the work during the daytime, we insisted on nighttime operations when traffic was at its lowest ebb. By detouring eastbound (northbound) traffic to the lower level truck route and maintaining westbound (southbound) traffic on the Skyway, the resurfacing job was carried out without a hitch.

As to the results obtained:

1. Tests reveal that a high degree of traction has been obtained both in wet and dry weather. This fact is borne out by numerous tests.
2. The new surface became rutted in the unseasonably hot weather which prevailed immediately following its application. Our people say these ruts can be "ironed out" with a roller and this operation will be performed when a sufficiently hot day presents itself. In other words, we consider the job as it now stands as merely the "first bite of the cherry".

In the words of a JERSEY JOURNAL editorial, "It was put on to reduce the skidding factor on the Skyway which was a notoriously dangerous road. In yesterday's rain we tried our brakes on a quick stop and there was not the least hint of a skid."

CENTERLINE BARRIERS

Encouraged by reports from many sections as to the effectiveness of Centerline Barriers in eliminating fatalities resulting from head-on collisions, we are continuing erection of the barriers on routes where narrow islands and sloping curbs contribute to our motor vehicle death rate. On July 3 bids were taken to extend Route 4 barrier construction westward from the Hackensack River to Riveredge. Similar construction on the Trenton Freeway was recently completed.

Englewood presented us with some very convincing statistics regarding barriers which we erected on Route 4 last year. The following is the record of their police department before and after barrier erection:

<u>Period</u>	<u>Accidents</u>	<u>Injuries</u>	<u>Fatalities</u>
Jan. 1952 to Sept. 1954 (33 months)	74	75	6 *
April 1955 to June 1956 (15 months)	51	20	0

* All fatalities caused by vehicles crossing center island.

On Route 22 where the barriers have been in operation for some time, we have changed the reflectors on top from white to red. The white reflectors coincided with oncoming headlights and the result was extremely confusing to drivers.

HUDSON COUNTY BOULEVARD

Hudson County engineer Thourot visited us on June 18 for the purpose of determining our position re: the placing of Hudson County Boulevard under the Federal Aid Secondary System, thereby making it eligible for Federal funds on a 50-50 matching basis with the County. We are not averse to this move and are waiting further word from the Hudson County people prior to setting up an exploratory meeting with them and the Bureau of Public Roads.

ESSEX EAST-WEST FREEWAY

On the evening of June 28 we visited Mayor Quinn of West Orange re: the alignment of the Freeway. This trip wound up our visits to Essex County municipalities through which the Freeway alignment extends. West Orange wants the route extended to Route 10 to avert what they feel (and our people don't) will be heavy traffic congestion on Northfield Road. We are investigating the possibility of tying the Freeway into U. S. 1 on the east and Route U. S. 46 or Route U. S. 202 on the west and to obtain interstate status. This would result in 90-10 participation by the federal government rather than 50-50. To count on such classification is purely fictional at this stage. The proposition presents a rather delicate negotiation and must be handled carefully. It is not without hope for success, however.

MIDDLESEX FREEWAY

After a series of meetings both here and in New Brunswick, it would appear that the alignment of the Middlesex Freeway from the Outerbridge Crossing to Route 22 in Bound Brook is about finalized. The only section of the alignment not completely agreeable to the municipalities through which it is proposed to run is in Perth Amboy. There the proximity of the line to the Holy Trinity Church (about 350 feet away) has resulted in vigorous opposition from church spokesmen. This opposition is not shared to any marked degree by the city officials, however.

At a July 5 meeting in Trenton with officials of Perth Amboy, Woodbridge Township and Edison Township, it was disclosed the townships prefer the Department's proposed alignment although both were willing to accept alternatives to the north or south if such routes would aid Perth Amboy in settling the local problem. It is our impression that the city considers the Department's line to be the best.

It has been brought to the attention of both county and municipal officials that the Freeway is part of an interstate route (U.S.202) extending from the New York State line near Suffern to U. S. 1 in Edison Township. As such, the section west of U. S. 1 could be built with 90% of federal participation and 10% state. From U. S. 1 to the Outerbridge Crossing the route will have to be built on a

MIDDLESEX FREEWAY, cont'd

50-50 basis. Because of this we might terminate proposed construction at U. S. 1 if intolerable and unreasonable opposition develops in Perth Amboy. We do not look for such developments, however. To safeguard our position, therefore, we have directed the consulting engineers to look the line over once more to see if any modifications can be made without reducing the efficiency of the Freeway or increasing damage to Perth Amboy.

AIR PHOTOGRAPHY

We recently took some needed air photos of the Freeway and East-West Highway in Trenton using our own photographer and the services of a light plane from a local airfield. I believe you will be interested in some of the results as shown in the following photographs as well as in the cost which was a mere \$18.00 - or \$1.50 each for the dozen views.



















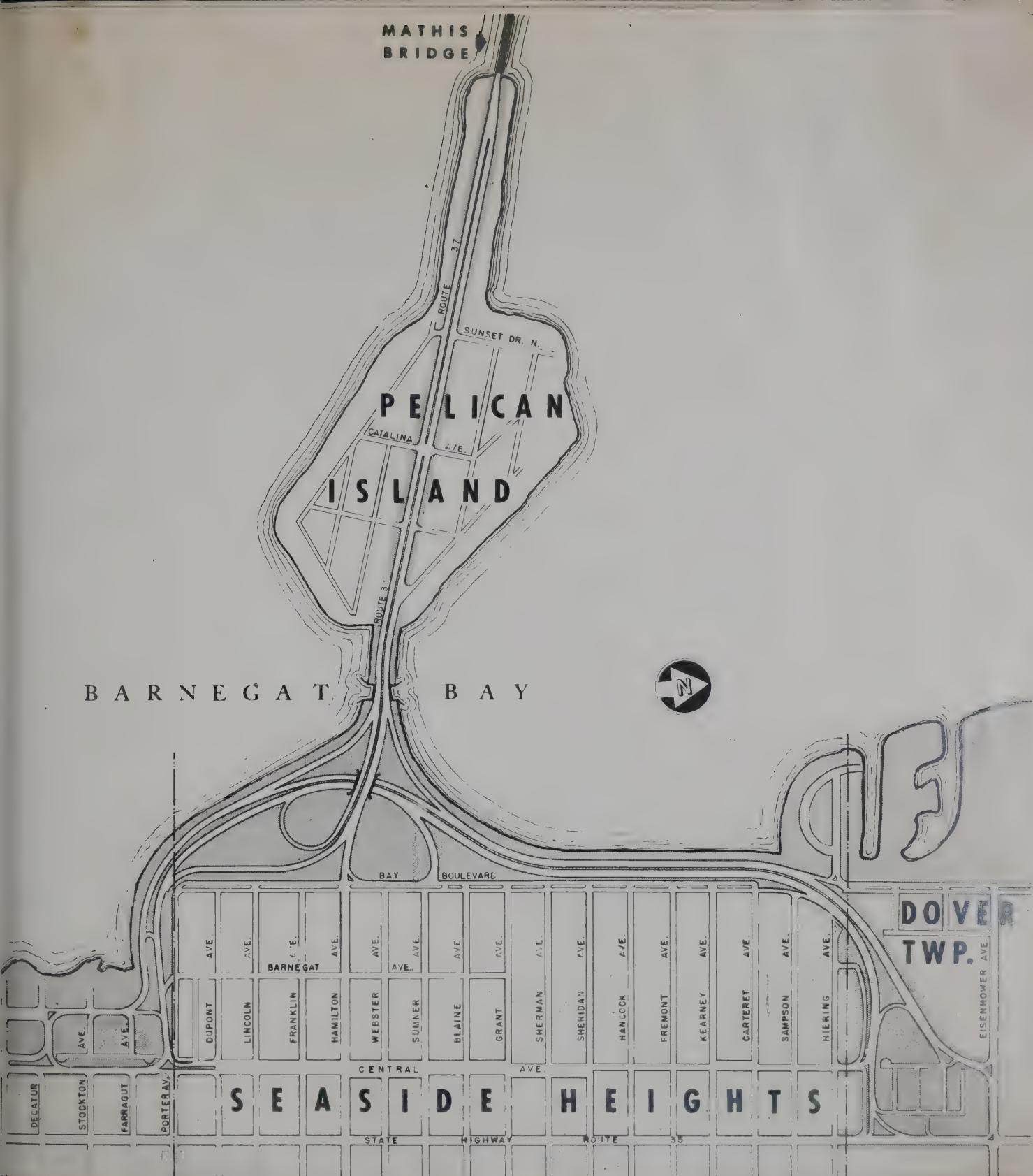
CONSTRUCTION - BIDS

June 12 - Garden State Parkway - Union & Middlesex Counties	
Center island safety construction	160,335.07
June 12 - Route U. S. 206 - Morris-Somerset Counties,	
Pavement widening - "creeper" lanes	156,278.82
June 12 - Route 42 - Camden County - dualization	560,905.14
June 26 - Route U. S. 46 - Passaic County - pavement	
widening	43,832.05
June 26 - Route 88 - Ocean County - Intersection	
improvement	25,367.90
June 26 - Route 3 - Passaic River Bridge - painting	25,490.00
June 26 - Route 58 - Stickel Bridge - painting	58,000.00
June 26 - Route 37 - Thos. Mathis Bridge - painting	32,460.00
June 26 - Route S-49 - Grassy Sound - painting	8,000.00
July 3 - Route U. S. 46 - Passaic County - resurfacing	82,291.45
July 3 - Route U. S. 1 & 9 - Bergen County	
Fairview intersection revision	28,206.75
July 3 - Route 4 - Hackensack - barrier curb	37,109.35
July 10 - Route 4 Parkway - Middlesex-Union Counties -	
center island planting	61,239.60
July 10 - Route 18 - E. Brunswick Township, Middlesex County	
Intersection revision	53,883.64
	<u>1,333,402.77</u>

ADVERTISEMENTS

- July 17 - Route U. S. 206 - Chester Township, Morris County - pavement widening
- July 17 - Route 28 - Somerville, Somerset County pavement resurfacing
- July 17 - Route U. S. 206, Mansfield Township, Burlington County - Grading, paving and bridges.
- July 17 - Route 23 - Borough of Franklin and Township of Hardyston, Sussex County - pavement widening.
- July 24 - Route 3 - Township of Little Falls and City of Clifton, Passaic County - intersection revision
- July 31 - Route 10 - West Orange, Essex County - pavement widening and resurfacing

MATHIS
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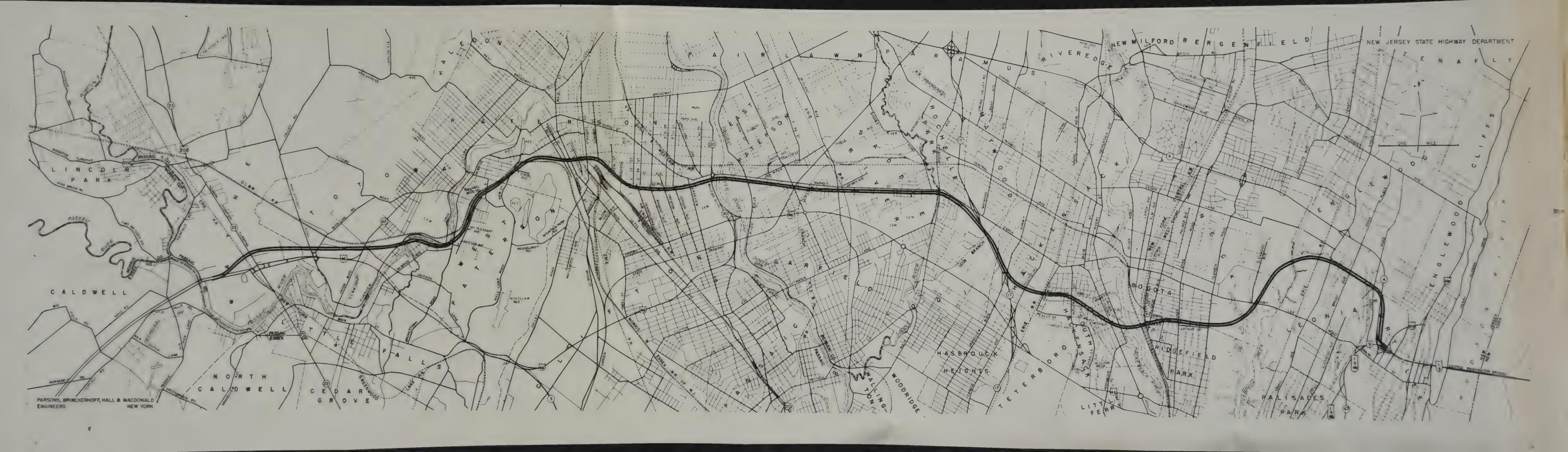


This map shows the proposed Pelican Island - Seaside Heights plan as modified following conferences with affected communities. The plan provides a choice of entrance and exit points and serves to distribute rather than concentrate incoming traffic. This plan would be the first step with widening of the Mathis Bridge and dualization of Route 37 to the Parkway at a later day.











N.J. STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
RELEASE TUES. P.M., JUNE 26.

1956
BERGEN-PASSAIC EXPRESSWAY
ALIGNMENT.

Trenton, June 26.- State Highway Commissioner Dwight R. G. Palmer today announced the final alignment of the proposed 17-1/2 mile Bergen-Passaic Expressway between Route 46 in Wayne Township and Fort Lee.

The announcement follows a series of meetings held during the last two weeks with officials of the 15 municipalities through which the eight-lane super highway will be routed. These discussions resulted on many modifications in the original line, Commissioner Palmer said.

In general the \$115,000,000 Expressway will follow the so-called northern route through Fort Lee, Englewood and Leonia and the southern route for the remainder of the distance to a point beyond Route 23.

The highway as proposed will occupy a 300-foot right-of-way except where carried on structures or where the overall width is decreased in heavily built-up areas to avoid property damage. The design calls for two four-lane roadways flanked by wide shoulders and separated by a 62-foot center island to provide space for future transportation needs, Commissioner Palmer said.

To prevent the type of roadside encroachment which has reduced the efficiency of Routes 4 and 46, the new route will be constructed as a freeway on exclusive right-of-way with exit and entrance at prescribed interchange locations only.

1956

Bergen-Passaic Expressway
Alignment.

Throughout its entire length selected cross streets and highways will be overpassed or underpassed to serve local travel, reduce accidents and provide for a continuous traffic flow.

As a means of conserving space the design will call for the construction of "finger ramps" parallel to the main roadways rather than extensive looping cloverleafs. The location of these on and off ramps will be determined in later conferences with each municipality to assure conformity with local traffic patterns, Commissioner Palmer said. He also stated that subsequent meetings with municipal officials will be held before final decision is made regarding which local streets will be carried over or under the Expressway.

Plans for the route also will call for landscaping the entire length with trees, flowering shrubs and vines - both in the center island and on the slopes to provide a park-like setting in each municipality. The plantings will perform several functions, the Commissioner said, namely, to beautify the road, act as sound absorbing barriers and minimize headlight glare.

The announced alignment is described by Commissioner Palmer as the "best choice possible" and the result of "give and take" on the part of municipalities and the State Highway Department.

"We have worked night and day to establish a line which will cause the least possible inconvenience to municipalities and at the same time provide each town and the surrounding area with maximum benefits," he said. "In meeting this objective we have had outstanding cooperation from forward looking officials and wherever possible modifications in the original line have been made as a result of their suggestions."

1956
Bergen-Passaic Expressway
Alignment.

Highway Department traffic studies disclose that as much as 82 per cent of all travel on the proposed route will be local in character, with either its origin or destination within communities through which it passes. Because of this fact travel on Routes 4 and 46 as well as on many local streets will be reduced by 50 per cent. The studies show that both State routes are now carrying 100 per cent above their designed capacities.

While no target date has been set for the completion of the Expressway, Commissioner Palmer estimates it will take up to a year and a half to complete surveys and plans and acquire the necessary right-of-way before construction can get under way. Another one and one-half to two years will be required for constructing the route, he said. Under this schedule it is estimated that property owners will have at least a year in which to relocate homes or businesses.

Although the announced alignment is considered to be final, the Highway Commissioner emphasized that it has not yet been "pin-pointed" and is still subject to minor revisions after consultation with local officials and completion of actual instrument surveys. The line also must be approved by the U. S. Bureau of Public Roads, he said, since under the proposed National Interstate Highway Program 90 percent of the cost of the road will be paid by the Federal Government.

As announced the Expressway will traverse the following general alignment:

1956
Bergen-Passaic Expressway
Alignment.

Beginning with a connection with Route U.S. 46 at a point just west of Route 23 in Wayne Township it will extend easterly on the north of Route U.S. 46 to Union Boulevard, Totowa. Continuing south of the D.L. & W. RR it will cross the Passaic River into West Paterson and follow the railroad on the south to the vicinity of Dixon Avenue, Paterson, where it crosses the railroad and turns east to Beckwith Avenue. Turning southeast on the easterly side of Beckwith Avenue to the vicinity of 23rd Avenue, the route then swings east and parallels 23rd Avenue on the southerly side to a point between Alabama and Maryland Avenues. From there it crosses the Passaic River to the south of the Market Street bridge - between the Dumont and Marcal plants - and continues through East Paterson and Saddle Brook south of, and parallel to, Market Street.

Skirting the north side of the cemetery in Saddle Brook the line bends southeast into Lodi to form an intersection with Route 17 in Lodi and Hackensack. Turning east from Route 17 at a point near Summit Avenue it runs easterly along the boundary of South Hackensack and Hackensack to the Hackensack River where it curves easterly across the river and crosses over the southern end of the Continental Paper Company and runs through the northwest corner of Ridgefield Park into Bogota near 4th Street.

Continuing east along the Bogota-Ridgefield Park boundary the route will enter Teaneck north of Arthur Street. At a point east of Teaneck Road it will curve to the north and run through the western section of the proposed marine park and enter the extreme northwest corner of Leonia. It will cross the Leonia-Englewood boundary just to the east of the Erie RR and continue along the north side of that boundary to a point where Leonia, Englewood and Fort Lee join. From there it turns south and crosses Route 4 and continues east of Route 4 to a proposed interchange with the George Washington Bridge Plaza.

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